



MISTLETOE & WITCHES BROOM

Mistletoe

Mistletoe is a parasitic flowering plant that can grow on many Palo Verde, Mesquite and Acacia trees. It grows into a dense mass of branched stems on the infected tree.

Mistletoe infections are mainly spread by birds that feed on the Mistletoe berries and tap into the tree's system for food and water. Once an infection has occurred, the root system of the Mistletoe grows within the tree branch. Left untouched, it will attain a size that will greatly weaken the tree and can kill major branches or even the entire tree. The control of Mistletoe is difficult in large areas such as the golf courses and natural area open spaces (NAOS).



The most effective way to control Mistletoe and prevent its spread is to prune out infected branches as soon as it appears. It is recommended to prune the tree branch below the point where the Mistletoe is attached. Detection and control can best be done in the fall and winter when Mistletoe is easily seen.

Witches Broom

Witches Broom is growth response to a mite infestation that causes a deformity in the natural structure of the tree which is often found in Palo Verde trees. To identify Witches Broom, look for a dense mass of shoots growing from a single point resembling a broom or a bird's nest. Witches Broom is not parasitic and has its own photosynthesis process to receive its nutrients.

Control of Witches Broom is best accomplished by properly pruning the infected branches to remove the brooms. Because the disease is caused by insects, further treatment may be needed with the application of a systemic insecticide/miticide by a licensed pest control operator.

